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FINANCING THE INTEGRATED TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Global Environment Facility and technical cooperation activities

Report by the Director-General

Reports on the progress made to implement the activities outlined in resolution GC.8/Res.2 adopted by the General Conference at its eighth session, in compliance with paragraph (f) of that resolution.

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Introduction

1. Following the adoption of resolution GC.8/Res.2 by the General Conference, a review was conducted to determine the strategy for its implementation. In recognition of the emphasis placed by the Conference on the element of collaboration—both with Member States and with other organizations—in implementing the resolution, the approach highlighted the need to develop contacts with organizations, in particular those specified in the resolution.

I. FOLLOW-UP IN VIENNA

2. As a first step, in early February 2000, UNIDO extended an invitation to Permanent Missions to presentations on UNIDO involvement in the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for regional groups on 16 February 2000 and for donor countries on 7 March 2000 respectively. The invitation was accompanied by general background information on GEF, its operational and political focal points as well as its Council members. The presentations were attended by approximately 70 representatives of Permanent Missions.

3. Both presentations outlined UNIDO involvement in the three operational programmes of GEF within the competence and field of expertise of UNIDO: climate change, international waters and biodiversity. A UNIDO strategy for future activities was elaborated and a list of GEF ongoing and pipeline projects was provided, including those in the process of finalization with UNIDO involvement. Question and answer sessions provided participants the opportunity to obtain clarification on technical matters related to implementation of GEF programmes.

4. Parallel to the presentations, a number of individual meetings with Permanent Representatives as well as with two GEF focal points (Austria and Islamic Republic of Iran) were convened by the Managing Director during February and March 2000.

II. FOLLOW-UP OUTSIDE VIENNA

5. A number of missions were carried out during February and March 2000, both by the Managing Director of the Sectoral Support and Environmental Sustainability Division and Directors or senior staff of the two relevant branches (Industrial Energy Efficiency Branch and Cleaner Production and Environmental Management Branch). A number of meetings held during these missions are expected to yield concrete results over time.

6. The first mission included meetings in New York with the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development, UNDP, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the GEF Secretariat, and with the United States Departments of State, Treasury and Commerce and the World Bank in Washington.

7. A second mission featured meetings with the State Environmental Protection Agency and the Ministry of Water Resources in China and with the Ministries of Industry, Finance, Environment and Forests and Chemicals and Fertilizers in India.

8. Parallel to these, missions were undertaken to Cuba, Kenya, Malaysia and Viet Nam in connection with the implementation of GEF/UNIDO ongoing projects. In Cuba, particularly, the GEF counterparts and focal point as well as the local UNDP office were contacted and possibilities for UNIDO involvement in GEF country projects were discussed in depth.

9. Further missions, including to major donor countries, are foreseen for April and May 2000. Already agreed upon are visits to Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, the United Kingdom and Viet Nam.

III. STATUS OF GENERAL CONFERENCE REQUESTS

10. Resolution GC.8/Res.2 addressed a number of specific points, for which the status of implementation is summarized below.

Mobilization of available resources

11. To date, resources have been utilized primarily for undertaking the missions described in chapter II above.

Cooperation with GEF, World Bank, UNDP and UNEP

12. Cooperation with the World Bank has been initiated and foresees within the year 2000 collaboration in the area of persistent organic pollutants. Cooperation with UNDP has been very effective, featuring activities such as identifying projects in Cuba, defining the modalities of execution in Kenya and formulating two large-scale GEF projects in India.

13. Moreover, a GEF project for India was recently approved for coal bed methane recovery and commercial utilization in the amount of $14,952,000, of which $8,913,000 is to be implemented by UNIDO.

14. In the meetings held with the GEF secretariat, GEF expressed its appreciation for the resolution adopted by the General Conference of UNIDO and confirmed its interest in cooperating in all three areas identified (climate change, international waters and biodiversity).

GEF focal points

15. Contacts with GEF focal points have been initiated in all regions. In a number of countries (Cuba, India, China, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Malaysia, Viet Nam), contacts with focal points have already taken place.

Cooperation opportunities with other organizations

16. As UNIDO activities in the GEF area gain momentum, the need for cooperation with other competent organizations increases. It is expected that concrete results will be achieved as of the second half of 2000.

IV. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE BOARD

17. The Board may wish to take note of the information provided in the present document.